**Poetic Structures Mini Unit**

**Project Description**

At the end of the unit students will have created at least one poem in each of the styles we have explored in the unit: haiku, sonnet, and free verse; these poems will be about various topics that they students have chosen. Students will **select one poem** from these three. They will then **rewrite the remaining two poems on the same subject** as the poem they have chosen, but in the remaining two structures. Thus, the final product will be three poems on the same topic but in three varying styles: haiku, sonnet, and free verse. When the students have completed their collection they will **write a 1-2 page reflection** about the process of writing their poems, which structure they felt was the best means of expressing their subject, and why. Students should refer to their poems to provide support for their conclusions. Students should choose a method of sharing their poems with the class: this may be a poster or handout with the poems written on it so that their classmates can read them, or a reading of the poems in front of the class.

**PROCEDURES**

Step 1: Ask students to assemble the poems that they have written for the unit thus far.

Step 2: Have them carefully review their poems and decide on one poem about the subject that they prefer. It may be a haiku, a sonnet, or a free verse poem.

Step 3: Students will then write two more poems about the same subject, using the remaining two structures. (\*Students will have a haiku, a sonnet, and a free verse poem, each of which is about the same subject)

Step 4: Students will then write a 1-2 page reflection paper about which poem they think best expresses their chosen subject and why. They should reference their poems in this paper to provide support for their opinions.

Step 5: Students will create a simple presentation to share their poems with their classmates. They may do this either by creating a poster or handout with their poems, or by reading their poems aloud to the class in a formal poetry reading.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

\*completion of three poems.

\*correct usage of three poetic forms: haiku, sonnet, and free verse.

\* reflection paper with clear explanation of why student chose preferred poetic structure (in relation to the chosen topic), supported by evidence from the poems. \*correct spelling and grammar (in reflection paper).

\*presentation to share poems with the class (may be poster, handout, or poetry reading).

**RESOURCES**

1. [www.hsa-**haiku**.org/](http://www.hsa-haiku.org/)

This website is a resource for writing haiku. There are examples of haiku poems and resources/advice about writing haiku in English.

2. Shakespeare sonnet handout

3. Free Verse Poetry handout

4. [www.poets.org](http://www.poetry.org)

This website is has many examples of poems in various styles, as well as poet bios, history, and more.

Reflection Sample

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Ms. Teacher

10th Grade English

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Final Poetry Assessment Reflection

While writing my poems, I found using the different poetic structures enabled me to describe the experience of waking up in various ways. A main challenge for me was to go from one type of poem to the other because in the haiku I had to be very precise with my language and word choice. In the sonnet, I needed to describe the imagery and paint a picture of my experience, while writing the free verse poem I had to decide what would be the best way for me to express my feelings about waking up while not creating prose. I had to reread my poems several times and assess what meaning each individual poem created.

The poetic structure I found to best convey my feelings about waking up was the haiku structure. While the idea of counting syllables is easy, when put to practice, I found each syllable becomes highly important. I had to weight my feelings, senses and images connected to waking up in order to select the most expressive words. Initially, I used the color black to describe my eyelids, but after recreating the instant of waking up in my mind, I realized a ray of sunlight hitting my eyelids is actually pink. The following line, “A crack of light and breath…” captures the usual cause of awakening for me. The sunlight always manages to creep between the gaps in my curtains. The breath I take is my way of preparing and accepting the beginning of a new day. In using these succinct sensory words, I was able to create a snapshot of my experience when waking up through the haiku’s strict, syllabic structure.

Haiku Example

Pink of my eyelids

A crack of light and a breath…

I am awake now

Sonnet Example

Upon Waking

As I roll over under my covers

I remind myself that it wasn’t real

Although awake, the other world hovers

What my brain wants to hide, it can’t conceal

My arms tremble like buildings in a quake

My thoughts bounce around like a ball encaged

Was it all just a dream, a big mistake?

Confused and upset, my blood fills with rage

I shake my head looking from wall to wall

My hands are numb and like something foreign

I felt out of place, overwhelmed, and small

Consumed by fear, my reality torn

I take a deep breath and slowly exhale

I feel a release, no longer in jail

Free Verse Example

I soak in black

Sweet

sweet, darkness.

beep beep beep

beep beep beep

Struggling for surrounding consciousness

Pillows,

twisted sheet around my legs

I crack an eye

Hot blinding

yellow flash

beep beep beep

groping and reaching for the cure

stop stop stop

I hit the button.

I am awake.